DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 427 363 CS 509 996

AUTHOR Gareis, Elisabeth
TITLE Standards and Practices for Evaluating ESL Students in Communication-Intensive Classes across the Curriculum.
PUB DATE 1998-11-00
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Communication Association (84th, New York, NY, November 21-24, 1998). For a related paper, see CS 509 997.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS College Faculty; Communication Problems; *Communication Skills; *English (Second Language); *Evaluation Methods; Higher Education; *Student Evaluation; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Behavior; Teacher Student Relationship; Teacher Workshops
IDENTIFIERS Communication Across the Curriculum; *Communication Intensive Courses; *Nonnative Speakers

ABSTRACT

Noting that employers in the New York City area have complained about the lack of communication skills of City University of New York (CUNY) graduates, this paper discusses a new program of communication-intensive courses at Baruch College (a CUNY college with a specialization in business) to address the problem. The paper highlights standards and practices for evaluating nonnative speakers (NNSs) in communication-intensive courses (CICs) by presenting three sets of materials and data: (1) a handout on guidelines for teaching NNSs, distributed during a faculty development workshop in the summer of 1997; (2) results of a CIC faculty survey on communication difficulties of NNSs conducted during the pilot semester in the fall of 1997; and (3) results of a CIC faculty survey on the assessment of NNSs conducted during the Fall of 1998. The paper concludes that faculty members reported a great number of communication difficulties among NNSs, and that many faculty members were willing to make significant concessions. (Contains 10 references.) (RS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 427 363

Standards and Practices for Evaluating ESL Students in Communication-Intensive Classes Across the Curriculum

Elisabeth Gareis

Baruch College/CUNY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

E. Gareis

2B

Elisabeth Gareis
Dept. of Speech, G-1326
Baruch College/CUNY
17 Lexington Ave.
New York, NY 10010
Tel.: (914) 524-7915
Fax: (914) 524-7559
E-mail: egareis@newton.baruch.cuny.edu

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Standards and Practices for Evaluating ESL Students in Communication-Intensive Classes Across the Curriculum

In recent years, employers in the New York City area have complained about the lack of communication skills in CUNY graduates. In the Fall of 1998, Baruch College (a CUNY college with a specialization in business) initiated a new program to address the problem. Part of the program is the identification of existing courses with a communication focus. These courses can be divided into two groups: basic communication courses (BCCs) which are part of the core curriculum (Speech Communication and two English composition courses) and specialized communication courses (SCCs), a number of which is now required for graduation (e.g., Speech for Executives, Managerial Communication, Intercultural Communication, Business English). In addition, a new course format was created: the communication-intensive course (CIC) This new course format is the focus of this paper.

Each department at Baruch College offers at least one of its regular courses in a CIC format, and students have to take six CICs before they can graduate. To qualify as a CIC, a course has to meet certain criteria: (1) It has to emphasize writing and/or oral presentations. (2) It has to include readings other than standardized textbooks. (3) In addition to lectures, instructors have to use interactive forms of presenting course material. (4) Special provisions have to be made for students to receive personal and/or small group instruction.

The program, partially funded through a large donation, is receiving extensive support from the College. Before the pilot semester in the Fall of 1997, for example, CIC instructors were paid a stipend to attend (or lead) faculty development workshops on communication across the curriculum. In addition, instructors receive release time every semester they teach a CIC and are assigned a communication consultant (usually a graduate student) who is available to help students on an individual basis.

To highlight standards and practices for evaluating nonnative speakers (NNSs) in CICs, three sets of materials/data are provided below: (1) a handout on guidelines for teaching NNSs, distributed during a faculty development workshop in the Summer of 1997, (2) the results of a CIC faculty survey on communication difficulties of NNSs, conducted during the pilot semester in the Fall of 1997, and (3) the results of a CIC faculty survey on the assessment of NNSs, conducted during the Fall of 1998.

Faculty Development Workshop Handout: Guidelines for Teaching NNSs

Linguistic Considerations

1. Use clear, normal speech. Pause between major idea units. If necessary, use a slower (yet natural) rate of speech. Clearly enunciate.

2. The most difficult aspect of English for many nonnative speakers is uncommon vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. Limit the use of these items or supplement them with simpler paraphrases. Be especially careful to use accessible language in examinations and assignment instructions.

3. With respect to classroom participation and informal discourse, focus on what students are trying to communicate, not on errors. If it is necessary to correct students' pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar, try to do so individually, away from the group.

4. Refer students who need assistance to Baruch College support services (Student Academic Consulting Center, Speech Lab, Writing Lab) or other sources (private tutoring, Continuing Studies). Students may also be interested in electives offered in the Speech and English department or extracurricular activities addressing communication proficiency (e.g., Toastmasters).

Classroom Discourse

5. Make sure that nonnative speakers are seated where they can see and hear well.

6. Use nonverbal cues (such as gestures, pictures, blackboard sketches, and concrete objects) in your teaching to assist students' comprehension.

7. Rephrase and repeat important utterances.

8. Provide examples and analogies. Supplement culturally specific examples (e.g., references to U.S. history or popular culture) with examples from non-U.S. settings. As an alternative, let students provide their own examples to illustrate a point under discussion.

9. Frame different topics within connecting utterances (e.g., "Okay, you have decided to adopt strategy A. Now, let's discuss how to implement the plan.")

10. Monitor students' comprehension and progress throughout the class. Check for understanding by asking students to decide if information is true or false, by asking student to provide examples, by having students paraphrase important terms in their own words, by having students summarize key information, and by having students ask each other questions about the covered material.

11. Summarize and clarify whenever needed.

12. Vary the way of calling on individuals. For example, call on students by name, ask for volunteers to respond, and call on the whole group. This helps involve everyone.

13. Warm up students by asking simple questions first. Having answered a question correctly, students have "saved face" and may risk responding incorrectly to more challenging questions.

14. Give "extra chances" to students who don't respond to an elicitation through strategies such as pausing to give the students plenty of time to speak. Additional elicitation techniques include prompting (e.g., "What options did you pick? Could you read your list, please.") and repeating the elicitation. Also invite students who do respond to say more.

15. Use confirmation checks (e.g., "You selected alternative B, right?") and clarification requests (e.g., "I didn't get the last word. You said computers and what else?").

16. Repeat or restate students' questions before answering them. Also rephrase student responses and/or expand on them to provide further input to the speaker and the group.

17. Encourage students to listen actively to each other and negotiate the meaning of conceptually or linguistically unclear utterances without you as an intermediary. Clarification techniques for the speaker include repetition of utterances, slow and clear enunciation, and paraphrasing. Listeners should focus and be specific in their quest for clarification (i.e., ask for repetition of words, paraphrasing of sentences, explanation of concepts, examples, etc.).

Lesson Planning

18. Provide a clear outline or plan of the lesson at the beginning of class.

19. Build predictability into instructional routines such as opening and closing activities, directions, and homework assignments.

Activities and Assignments

20. Involve nonnative speakers in some manner in all classroom activities.

21. Learn as much about your nonnative speakers as you can. The more you know about these students and their backgrounds, the easier it will be to incorporate them into your classroom. Their experiences can be used to enrich the lives of all students.

22. Discuss your personal experiences and encourage students to discuss theirs, as they relate to the course content.

23. Use cooperative learning groups to encourage peer language teaching and learning. Include pair, small group, and full group activities in your class sessions. Well-organized and well-implemented cooperative learning programs can yield increased academic achievement, better social skills, improved intercultural relations, and more use of higher-order thinking skills. Pair and small group activities are also a good warm-up for full group discussions in classes where student participation is sparse or unequal.

24. Suggest or even require that students form study groups. If they protest that they do not have enough free time to meet, start them off with an initial meeting during class time, at which they can develop an agenda and a schedule. Reinforce their efforts during the term by inviting the groups to your office. Study groups can be conducted in person or on-line (e.g., through the On-line Essay).

25. Make your expectations clear. Whenever possible, provide examples of what you expect student to do in the writing as well as speech assignments. For examinations, you may want to give sample questions and examples of both strong and weak answers.

26. Do not just give assignments orally. Put them on the blackboard, or better, distribute them in writing.

27. Allow students to do outlines and early drafts of presentations and papers so that they can improve with practice and create better final products.

28. Feedback on drafts can be given by peers or the teacher. One way to ensure effective feedback processing is to require revise-and-resubmit letters. In these letters, students are asked to respond to the feedback they received and detail how they incorporated it in their revised papers (or why they chose not to incorporate it).

Intercultural Issues

Many nonnative students come from cultures in which expressing opinions, disagreeing with the teacher, and even asking spontaneous questions are considered disrespectful. Some may also show the reticence that comes with linguistic insecurity and the fear of ridicule. It is important to create a welcoming environment in which all students can feel secure and share in the learning experience.

29. To increase comfort and confidence levels, ensure frequent professor-student interaction, encourage students to see you before or after class, and schedule office-hour conferences.

30. Be patient and supportive in communication with nonnative speakers. Express interest in their experiences, language, and culture.

31. Be aware of body language; it can convey unspoken impatience or disapproval.

32. Do not hesitate to consult language or intercultural specialists when you are in doubt about problems of language or culture. Culture-based problems are sometimes difficult to detect. Teachers need to be on the lookout for them and particularly resist attributing them to other factors, such as slowness, negative attitude, or disability.

Support Services

speaking/writing	Student Academic Consulting Center
speaking	Speech/ESL Lab
writing	Writing Lab
intercultural	Counseling Center
international/immigration	International Student Services

Survey Results: Difficulties of Nonnative Speakers in CICs (Fall 1997)

1. Number of CIC faculty members (Fall 1997):	32	
2. Number of surveys returned:	25	
3. Number of CICs taught by respondents:	28	
4. Number of students enrolled in these courses:	1019	
5. Number of NNSs in these courses:	362	(35.5%)
6. Number of NNSs experiencing difficulties in communication activities:	214	(21% of total; 59.1% of NNSs)

7. Question: Which, if any, difficulties do your NNSs experience with respect to listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

Listening

- Some clear difficulties digesting course content and fairly mundane expectations vis a vis assignment completion.
- Two said that I speak too fast in lecture.
- Misunderstandings.
- This is very important.
- Hearing and understanding relationships between quantities or causal connections, implications etc. are harder for them to understand than step-by-step procedures.
- Difficulty understanding questions raised in class and responding to inquiries from instructor and other students.
- None--in general they are attentive listeners.
- I try to communicate very clearly. This has not been a problem.
- Not much.

Speaking

- Pronunciation.
- Correct pronunciation.
- Both students are reluctant to participate in class discussions.
- Difficulty speaking conversationally during oral presentations; overreliance on reading from prewritten scripts.
- Two or three have had problems communicating in their debates.
- Most do not volunteer spoken responses; I don't require any in this class.
- They are able to communicate their point, but consistent grammatical errors hinder their effectiveness.
- Withdrawal/shyness.
- Two expressed qualms about their speaking.
- For two Chinese students, a great deal of difficulty speaking extemporaneously whether formally or informally. For the other two (both from Western Africa), accent/intelligibility problems.
- Many refuse to speak during class discussions, despite the fact that it is a course requirement. I find it uncomfortable to call on students who do not volunteer and do not do so. I have students assigned as discussion leaders for the next part of the semester, so we'll see what kinds of suggestions come out of it. As for formal speaking, these students generally *read* their presentations and were unable to speak extemporaneously. I have given them suggestions on how to speak publicly, with key points on cards rather than full sentences, but to no avail.
- Can't understand several of my students even after I ask them to repeat and rephrase. Their accents are too heavy.
- Best participants are often nonnative speakers (Polish, Spanish, other Eastern European, Cantonese). Excellent discussions about why their test answers are correct.
- Some of my students may be foreign-born, or even accented in their language--but I would consider them fluent in their speech and writing.
- Most foreign students are o.k. but some are much too passive in class (Orientals).
- Reluctance to speak.
- At least seven of them had problems (serious problems) explaining things they were to present in class.

Reading

- Two have difficulty with long technical words; one has problems understanding the gist of a written assignment.
- Misunderstandings.
- Low level of comprehension; do not understand questions.
- None observed. Some students remarked that they did not understand some NY Times articles assigned but after discussion got the main points.
- Not observed.
- Some difficulty with more abstract material.
- Not much.

Writing

- Two especially, but all seven have problems with agreement, verb tenses, possessive, and other aspects of basic grammar.
- They make grammatical errors in their essays.
- Difficulty organizing essays logically and effectively communicating analysis and recommendations in case analyses.
- Different students (3-4) have very poor English grammar--spelling and syntax--not adequate for college without major remediation.
- Poor writing--long sentences, grammar problems.
- Most seem to have difficulty writing to express relationships (causal, implication, inclusion) between and among quantities.
- They are able to communicate their point, but consistent grammatical errors hinder their effectiveness.
- Students feel overwhelmed by having to struggle with both language problems and conceptual issues.
- Sentence structure, organization, development of an argument.
- Twelve have problems with grammar, three have problems with structure.
- Grammatical problems with one of the Chinese students; no other serious writing problems besides mundane expectations vis a vis assignment completion.
- Some of my students may be foreign-born, or even accented in their language--but I would consider them fluent in their speech and writing.
- Some students still do not understand the concept of plagiarism. They argue that since the professor wants work in correct English, and since they cannot write in correct English, they are happy to include sentences and paragraphs that come from others. I have asked them to rewrite their work several times, and with lots of guidance, it gets a little better. But lots remains to be done.
- Many students (not just nonnatives) are having trouble structuring their written work.
- Awkward syntax.
- Both native and nonnative speakers had problems writing essays.

8. Solutions suggested by faculty members:

- An extra hour for them to work on their speaking and reading aloud. More time to work in writing groups and to meet with faculty.
- Faculty training, student support services, smaller recitation sections to allow for more oral communication and discussion of reading/listening difficulties.
- They have to improve their spoken English (or just gain the necessary level of confidence to speak in class). Perhaps if they can attend regularly scheduled meetings with other nonnative speakers (and an instructor) where they are put on the spot to take a position on some ideas and present their arguments to others. They need a lot of practice in this.
- English immersion prior to substantive coursework. Clinics to review writing assignments prior to submission and subsequent to receiving feedback.
- Speech practice.
- Assessment procedures and student support services. Let me also point out that many of my section's native speakers have the same problems.

- In helping nonnative speakers understand relationships (esp. more complex ones), I try to use visual tools like diagrams, table, arrows, geometrical mnemonics, etc. so that they "see" the relationships and, hopefully, write about them with greater understanding and precision.
- Student support services. Clearly, the nonnative speakers are making consistent errors that reflect adherence to their native language. I would assume this can be corrected.
- Well, some tracking might have helped them.
- Really, the Americans are the problem. This is related to work rate and overall sloppiness with language.
- I suggest a semester-long course consisting of presentations and writing. It could be taught by Ph.D. students, since there is no need for lectures. I believe confidence in one's language skills can improve mostly by practice. Student support services could also be profitable. I don't think faculty can do much; at least in the context of established courses, where there's already too much to do. Also, I don't know how assessment procedures would be used, but it seems to me that what these students need is to break the ice and get to speak and write some. Once this minimal goal is reached, then they'll be ready for evaluation.
- Faculty training in teaching basic English. George Otte indicated that we were not to micro grade the papers, but it seems imperative for some students.
- The biggest problem is fitting student schedules to availability of tutors. One student suggested the course be five credits (one for English--meet with tutor). One student suggested emphasis on working in groups to give more opportunity for oral communication.
- Smaller classes, but much more/stronger preparation/courses before they get into our classes. These problems can't be fixed with a better classroom "style." Even higher entry standards would help.
- I distribute a paper copy of all assignments in addition to in-class display (via presentation graphics), Web page reinforcement, and oral discussion. I hesitate to call these "solutions"--the problems are quite persistent--but they do seem to help and at the very least allow me to point to many places were a students can find help with course requirements and/or content. This is a graduate course, with even less attention to (incoming) basic English skills than at the undergraduate level. I have few illusions about my ability to address these issues in any but a consciousness-raising way over the course of the semester when the starting point is so low.
- I have tried to get students to speak in various modes: formal presentations using prepared Power Point slides.
- The students from cultures where classroom participation is not encouraged need extra training. They need to be taught what is expected of them and get the opportunity to practice the respective skills prior to taking regular courses.
- My course is a capstone (required) course--practically the last one before the students get their MBA degree. This course is most appropriate for a final review/rehearsal of communication skills--and a very useful one--that should be imparted in all prior courses.
- Just practice, practice.
- The Asian students definitely need more coaching and practice sessions on expressing themselves in class. Some do, despite difficulties in being understood, and the class is generally patient in hearing them out. This should encourage shy students, but it doesn't seem to. The Asian students need coaching and perhaps some special class in these presentation skills. They are very important, especially at the graduate level.
- Limit the number of students, so that attention can be given to those who need help and/or have mandatory meetings with the graduate assistant.

- There is not enough time in class to address the problems of the less proficient nonnative speakers. What's more, graduate assistants and tutors may be trained in assisting students with writing assignments, but they are usually not knowledgeable in speech production. The diagnosis and correction of pronunciation deficiencies therefore doesn't receive the attention it deserves. Students should be directed to special classes that address this problem.

9. Summary of Results

Professors reported that 362 (35.5%) of the 1019 students in their CICs were NNSs (i.e., individuals who did not speak or write English with native fluency or accuracy--bilingual speakers were excluded). Of these 362 students, 59.1% (or 21% of the total population) experienced difficulties with communication activities.

Most of the difficulties were observed within the active language skills of speaking and writing. The most problematic issues with respect to speaking were pronunciation, participation in class, and extemporaneous speaking during formal and informal presentations. In the realm of writing, professors singled out problems with grammar and organization as most troublesome.

Several professors suggested the creation or expansion of the following services:

- Preparatory courses for less proficient NNSs.
- Introduction to U.S. educational culture for students not accustomed to participatory classroom practices.
- Smaller class sizes or recitation sections.
- Extra time in each class to practice presentations, work together in writing groups, and meet with faculty.
- Faculty training in helpful pedagogical techniques as well as in teaching English.
- Student support services.

Survey Results: Assessment of NNSs in CICs (Fall 1998)

1. Number of CIC faculty members (Fall 1998):	60	
2. Number of surveys returned:	21	
3. Number of CICs taught by respondents:	24	
4. Number of students enrolled in these courses:	690	
5. Number of NNSs in these courses:	253	(36.6%)

6. Question: Which, if any, difficulties have you encountered in evaluating NNSs in your classes?

- This class has no real problems in this respect.
- These students [in my classes] can be very well understood.
- None.
- None.
- None.
- These students need intensive assistance if they are to improve.

- Generally, a poor grasp of the requirements of written English as seen in poor choice of words and sentence structure.
- I have 1/2 dozen Poles who have trouble with articles, verbs, etc. and two Russians. I have two Chinese and two Koreans with serious English problems, spoken and written.
- Shyness, writing problems.
- Students exhibit problems with accuracy and fluency in speaking and writing.
- Some have more trouble with writing, others are reluctant to speak in class.
- Having other students understand their comments, getting them to write expressively enough.
- Whether some confusions or contradictions in presentations are due to imperfect translation (they think in their native language) rather than incomplete mastery of a subject.
- They tend to participate less; so, I have a hard time grading that part of their requirement.
- I have struggled with grading papers that are (1) limited due to language proficiency and (2) obviously written and/or edited by someone other than the student or a consultant.
- Classroom contribution. Presentations—grammar, expression, enunciation are all factors in the success of a speech. So, I stress the importance of rehearsing a presentation and feeling confident about the material.
- Mostly writing problems. I am more lenient with oral presentations since many students are afraid or shy. I give them lots of tips and crutches for their oral presentations.
- With native speakers, I evaluate oral reports on substance. For nonnative speakers, substance is difficult to discover; so, I have to focus more on the ability to speak well enough to be understood.
- I collect papers with no names—just ID numbers—when grading so that I don't go "soft" on "the nice quiet Asian woman" in my class, for example.
- I don't think the native/nonnative distinction is so critical. Several students born in the U.S. speak *very* poorly as do several reared in the U.S. who use their ethnicity as a rationale for poor English. Some of the most careful speakers are foreign-reared.
- Many native and nonnative speakers have not yet taken a speech course.

Summary

Of the 21 respondents, 5 experienced no difficulties in evaluating their NNSs, 16 experienced difficulties. Of the 16 respondents who experienced difficulties, 6 listed examples of the difficulties without referring to evaluation procedures, 4 mentioned that they were unsure how to evaluate, 2 made concessions to NNSs in their assessment and graded them with leniency, 1 made no concessions (he used blind grading procedures--papers had ID numbers only, no names).

7. Question: In your opinion, should language proficiency and cultural appropriateness be taken into consideration when grading nonnative speakers (e.g., should points be subtracted for incorrect grammar or culturally inappropriate behavior, such as the lack of direct eye contact during oral presentations)?

- Points should definitely not be subtracted for "culturally inappropriate behavior."
- No, but these issues should be addressing the one-on-one review and critique of presentations. Most important: Give them as many opportunities as possible to practice and improve their command of the language and understanding of cultural differences.
- No, they should be informed on ways to improve but not penalized.

- Depends on the assignment. If we want to encourage speaking, I think that taking off points is a problem, especially if the student has prepared the work and is trying very hard to communicate. For writing assignments, all students need to learn to read their work and edit it and after this is made clear, if they don't try to improve in subsequent assignments, some credit should be deducted for errors and lack of clarity. (This goes for native speakers, too.)
- No, only if it is gross; then students should not have been admitted, right?
- No.
- No.
- I give feedback on diction and organization but don't subtract points from the grade.
- Grammar and spelling should be counted. Cultural traits, like eye contact, should not.
- I think there should be some penalty for incorrect grammar. But I don't agree with subtracting points for culturally inappropriate behavior.
- I'm not sure where I land on this one, and I see language proficiency and cultural appropriateness as separate issues. I would greatly appreciate a forum for thoughtful discussion of these issues.
- Yes, but mildly.
- It's hard not to take it into consideration; so, students should be directed towards support services as soon as possible. With written reports, one can assume that students will seek external support; with oral presentations, a more sensitive approach should be advocated. Almost all students have taken SPE 1010 so they are conversant with basics of public speaking. It's always harder to assess nonnative speakers' class contribution (usually 10%) which is why I keep a close eye on them in small-group discussion when they can contribute in a less intimidating environment.
- Not at beginning CIC courses, but after three, I'd say.
- Yes, if it will count in real world--but only for measuring how much they improve by working during the semester.
- Incorrect grammar and culturally inappropriate behavior should be pointed out and corrected. They should be taking into account the grade, but not weighted heavily. The business world expects an "A" student to perform in a grammatical and culturally appropriate way.
- To some degree.
- Only if they are given sufficient opportunities and resources for improvement.
- Yes, in a CIC course, because a CIC course is specifically supposed to teach students to communicate.
- Yes, both language proficiency and cultural appropriateness (as it applies to communication assignments) should be taken into consideration.
- Yes, if the criteria are clearly explained.

Summary

Of the 21 respondents, 10 believed language and/or cultural appropriateness should not be counted in grading NNSs, 1 was unsure, and 10 believed it should be counted. Of the latter 10 respondents, 7 qualified their responses (e.g., they counted language and cultural proficiency, but "only mildly"); 3 didn't qualify their responses and answered that language and cultural appropriateness should be taken into consideration in CICs.

8. Question: Do you require that nonnative speakers seek assistance through Baruch College support services (e.g., meet with CIC consultants or visit the Student Academic Consulting Center)? If so, do you count these consultations as part of the students' grades?

- I do make such recommendations. Count? Perhaps in a rather intangible way.
- Consultations are formally part of students' grades, but constitute to a favorable grade.
- No. Encourage, yes.
- *All* students are encouraged to use SACC and the CIC writing consultant. How often they go should *not* be part of the grade.
- CIC consultations.
- Any student who needs help is referred to the CIC consultant.
- In the measure that this is an indication of a student's good will, I do.
- I believe all students should be treated equally--provided they master the subject. Every opportunity should be given then to practice and learn. Remember many will be returning to their country and culture--but it's important for them to learn "the American way" since that's a reason for their presence. The others learn by watching and, most importantly, "by doing."
- Don't require that these students meet with CIC consultants but strongly recommend it. One student has met with consultants, the other visits SACC and has been for quite some time.
- No.
- I recommend but do not require it.
- Require—no, suggest/recommend—yes.
- I do not require such consultation, but strongly advise students to seek help from my CIC teaching assistant or from SACC. Such suggestions have been met with appreciation from some student and ambivalence from others. I have asked students who use outside editing (a relative, spouse, friend, etc.) to submit both their original drafts and the edited versions so that I can point out patterned grammatical errors in their writing.
- No.
- I have requested that some students do so this semester, but I do not count consultations as a part of their grades.
- Tutoring is voluntary.
- I require that everyone with severe problems (e.g., more than 10 errors per paper) meet with the CIC consultant on a regular basis. I'm considering another alternative next semester: not grading papers that have more than 10 errors. Students get their paper back for revisions and points are subtracted for the ensuing late hand-in.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- Yes, tutoring, writing consultations.
- Yes. They're required to see the consultant at least twice during the semester while they are working on their paper.

Summary

Of the 21 respondents, 16 did not require that NNSs seek assistance through Baruch College support services, 4 required it, and 1 respondent required it only for students with severe problems.

9. Additional comments or recommendations:

- My view is to hold everyone to the same standard but give those having trouble (for whatever reason) lots of help and provide a variety of ways to succeed.
- Native speakers often have similar problems. It is to the nonnative speakers' advantage that they seem to have a greater willingness to work on language.

Conclusion

Faculty members reported a great number of communication difficulties among NNSs (of all NNSs in the CIC courses taught by the respondents in the Fall of 1997, 59.1 percent were reported to have difficulties). Pronunciation problems, lack of participation in class, and difficulties with extemporaneous speaking during formal and informal presentations were listed as the most troublesome with respect to oral communication; difficulties in written communication included problems with grammar and organization.

In their evaluation of NNSs, many faculty members were willing to make significant concessions. They either did not penalize their students for language deficiencies or counted deficiencies only "mildly." Differing opinions emerged with respect to linguistic versus cultural appropriateness; some faculty members asserted that language deficiencies should be taking into consideration when grading a student, but cultural problems (such as eye contact during oral presentations) should be disregarded.

Cultural appropriateness is often linked to speech communication, and the faculty members' unsure or negative stance may be an indication of their unfamiliarity with effective oral communication procedures. Faculty reactions and questions during the workshop given prior to the CIC pilot semester and inquiries (to the author) concerning the evaluation of oral presentations since that time provide further support for the possible lack of familiarity with oral communication effectiveness on part of faculty members in noncommunication disciplines. Faculty members seem more familiar with effectiveness in written communication; however, even with written work, some uncertainty seems to exist concerning evaluation procedures. One survey respondent asked for "basic English training," for example, to learn more about the evaluation of student writing.

In general, there may be a need for greater faculty development in written as well as oral communication effectiveness and evaluation. This need is reflected in another respondent's comment. This faculty member responded to the question on language and cultural appropriateness that she "would greatly appreciate a forum for thoughtful discussion of these issues."

Even though CICs were designed to focus on communication skills and are supported through faculty release time and out-of-class consultants, faculty members make concessions or seem unsure with respect to the improvement of communication skills in nonnative speakers. It needs to be clarified whether their practices are the result of a lenient philosophy, the lack of training in handling linguistic and cultural issues, or uncertainty concerning standards in CICs. The exact reasons should be investigated and findings be used for the refinement of CIC curricula.

References

Bennett, M. (1996). Beyond tolerance: Intercultural communication in a multicultural society. *TESOL Matters, 6*(3), 6.

Cochran, E. P. (1992). *Into the academic mainstream: Guidelines for teaching language minority students*. (Available from The Instructional Resource Center, Office of Academic Affairs, CUNY, 535 E. 80th St., New York, NY 10021)

Enright, D. S. (1991). Supporting children's English language development in grade-level and language classrooms. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.) (1991), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (2nd ed.) (pp. 386-402). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Ferris, D. R. (1997). The influence of teacher commentary on student revision. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*(2), 315-339.

George, P. (Producer). (1989). *Teaching the Chinese student* [video]. (Available from East Asia Fulbright Program, United States Information Agency, Washington, D. C. 20547)

Hill, W. M. F. (1982). *Learning thru discussion.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Kaplan, R. B. (1988). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. In J. S. Wurzel (Ed.), *Toward multiculturalism* (pp. 207-221). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Lieberman, D. A. (1996). Culture, problem solving, and pedagogical style. In L. A. Samovar & R. E. Porter, *Intercultural communication: A reader* (8th ed.) (pp. 191-207). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Powell, R. G. & Andersen, J. (1994). Culture and classroom communication. In L. A. Samovar & R. E. Porter, *Intercultural communication: A reader* (7th ed.) (pp. 322-329). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Snow, M. A. (1991). Teaching language through content. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.) (1991), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (2nd ed.) (pp. 315-328). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.